

RESOLUTION No. 2021-XXX
Abington Township, Pennsylvania
Climate Collaborative of Greater Philadelphia Resolution

An Initiative to Accelerate Effective Climate Actions

WHEREAS: Climate change is an urgent unfolding crisis that presents a serious threat to global stability, human existence, and Earth's living ecosystems;

WHEREAS: Increasingly more frequent and more extreme weather events due to the ongoing change in the global climate, pose immediate and local risks;

WHEREAS: The increase in global heat caused by the release of greenhouse gases (GHG) into the atmosphere, due in large part to the use of fossil fuels, is a major contributor to the ongoing change in the global climate;

WHEREAS: Climate change tests our infrastructure, emergency, and social services; access to food, water, and energy supplies; heightens disruption of services, commerce, and quality of life jeopardizing community health and safety;

WHEREAS: The 2015 United Nations Climate Change Conference in Paris resulted in a consensus among all 195 countries to limit the increase in global average temperatures to well below 2°C, ensure that greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions will not exceed sinks (total carbon capture) by the second half of this century and become carbon neutral between 2050 and 2100; and

WHEREAS: The UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) released a special report in 2018, on the impacts of global warming and the need to reduce global GHG emissions well before 2030 to hold warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius as beyond that, even half a degree will significantly worsen the risks of drought, floods, extreme heat, and poverty for hundreds of millions of people;

WHEREAS: To stay within 1.5 degrees Celsius, the 2018 IPCC report indicated that global net human-caused emissions would need to fall 45% from 2010 levels by 2030 and reach "net-zero," offsetting carbon emissions with carbon removal, by 2050;

WHEREAS: In 2018, the United States' Fourth National Climate Assessment made clear that climate change will wreak havoc across the United States, and the current pace and scale of national climate action is not sufficient to avert substantial damage to the economy, environment, and human health over the coming decades;

WHEREAS: The [2017 Montgomery County Hazard Mitigation Plan](#) evaluated “Flood, Flash Floods, and Ice Jams” particularly in the “Wissahickon Creek, including the Sandy Run” and “Winter Storms” as the two highest perceived hazardous threats;

WHEREAS: The [2015 “Growing Stronger: Toward a Climate Ready Philadelphia” Climate Adaptation Plan](#), depicts historical climate change since 2010 for the region to include the warmest summers and wettest years on record, an increase in hurricanes and a 2012 first time ever derecho, projections by the end of the century of four to 10 times as many days per year above 95 degrees Fahrenheit and as many as 16 days a year above 100 degrees Fahrenheit, creating an increase in health-related problems such as asthma, cardiovascular disease, COPD, and other respiratory diseases from higher levels of ozone, as well as adverse effects on regional transit, watersheds, stormwater and wastewater management; moreover and most recently, a [June 2020 Montgomery County derecho that killed three citizens](#);

WHEREAS: Abington Township has demonstrated its commitment to reducing its energy consumption and GHG emissions by:

- Having a robust recycling and composting program for waste diversion and materials reuse, achieving one of the highest municipal recycling rates in Pennsylvania
- Leading as one of the first Delaware Valley municipalities to retrofit traffic lights to LEDs
- Acting upon the Township's 2016 3 STAR Community™ sustainability rating through analysis and advocacy for the 2018 commitment to 100% renewable electricity for all Township buildings and operations to reduce emissions by 5,625 metric tons/year
- Submitting annual CDP Cities disclosures for climate action and mitigation planning
- Conducting an Urban Tree Canopy assessment and initiating a Master Tree Plan to preserve and enhance the essential ecosystem services that trees uniquely provide for carbon sequestration, air quality, mitigation of stormwater runoff and urban heat island effects, stream health and water quality improvement, and to address green space access disparities, as well as to optimize trees, woodlands, and/or riparian corridors to intercept and slow infiltrating stormwater as essential infrastructure for the built environment, and by revising Township procedures and engaging residents to grow our urban tree canopy through 14 years as a Tree City USA municipality, spending in 2020, approximately \$10 per capita on trees, including the value of 2016 volunteer hours
- Being recognized in 2018 by the [U.S. Green Building Council as a LEED Certified City](#) and for future sustainability planning, attaining a 2020 competitive grant to pursue recertification to conduct [this assessment](#) at no cost
- [Joining in 2019](#) with other leading towns and cities, the national Ready for 100 campaign to strive to transition to equitable and affordable 100% clean energy by 2050
- Embarking on this transition in 2020, through its Environmental Advisory Council, by undertaking comprehensive training through the Ready for 100 Community Energy Planning for Prosperity and Resiliency Program, in order to draft a [Strategic Energy Plan following U.S. Department of Energy Guidelines](#) that will encompass a framework that centers equity, inclusion and greenlining principles
- Completing in 2020, a 2018 community GHG inventory and committing to create a local climate action plan in 2021 as a [PA DEP Local Climate Action Program community](#)

WHEREAS: Abington Township is committed to being a community characterized by equity, health, safety, livability, prosperity, educational results and artistic expression, by actively embracing inclusion, diversity and innovative ways to involve all stakeholders through economic, environmental and social advisory entities;

WHEREAS: Abington Township recognizes that it has a responsibility to future generations and to the most vulnerable and overburdened by climate change, by taking an active stand to reduce GHG emissions within or consumed by the community;

WHEREAS: White America's Inconvenient Truth is Black America's Incontrovertible Pain, as evidenced in the disproportionately more harmful impact of climate change on Black communities and their far less ability to invest in renewable energy due to the added costs of living in older, more costly and less energy efficient housing stock that is exacerbated by a profoundly lower degree of homeownership and the additional inequities for investment and attracting needed capital for renewables and energy efficiency infrastructure, all demonstrating the need to focus on those most vulnerable to injustices through actions and partnerships for equity, prosperity, and resilience;

WHEREAS: A key strategy for achieving equitable, cost effective, even cost saving, energy source transition and GHG reduction is through collaboration and continued leadership with other regional and local organizations and communities, such as participating in aggregated procurement contracts - Power Purchase Agreements (PPAs) - for regional wind and solar energy; to this end, Abington Township recognizes the importance of developing a positive, working relationship with its electric energy supplier(s) to create the most advantageous and mutually beneficial plan for integrating locally-generated power for community businesses, organizations and local institutions and to produce energy cost savings for residents and local businesses while stimulating new economic activity and local jobs, all while simultaneously providing life-protecting benefits for everyone;

Be IT RESOLVED THAT:

- Abington Township will collaborate with other regional institutions including businesses, colleges and universities, cultural organizations, government authorities, and other entities to address climate change in our region by joining the [Climate Collaborative of Greater Philadelphia](#), to collectively and equitably cut carbon emissions faster and more efficiently than each could achieve on its own;
- Through the Collaborative's sharing of best practices, case studies, and other resources to support the climate actions of regional and local institutions, and by prioritizing energy reduction and renewables, green infrastructure, water efficiency and conservation, waste reduction and recycling, low-carbon transportation (such as transit, cycling and car sharing), low-carbon procurement options, community engagement, and community energy transition goals, GHG emissions reductions will be enhanced;

- To further Abington's current achievement of a [20.2 percent reduction in community greenhouse gas emissions from 2005 to 2018 and a 14.6 percent reduction from 2010 to 2018](#) as measured by the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission's Abington Township community-wide 2005, 2010 and 2015 GHG inventories and the Township's 2018 GHG inventory, new opportunities presented by the Collaborative will be leveraged so that Abington Township will now strive to adopt the IPCC targets of a 45% reduction in community wide carbon emissions by 2030 (from the 2010 inventory) and strive to attain "net-zero" carbon emissions by 2050;
- The Abington Township Environmental Advisory Council will provide guidance as requested, by the Abington Township Board of Commissioners, and the Office of the Township Manager to integrate these opportunities, initiatives and goals into the work flow of Township Departments including Wastewater, Public Works, Engineering and Code, Parks and Recreation, Community Development, Fire, and Police and guide local community organizations, businesses, institutions, and residents;
- All Abington Township stakeholders will have the opportunity and be encouraged to participate in the climate action planning and implementation process in a transparent, inclusionary, and equitable fashion to ensure broader and more informed voices in these decisions to promote economic, environmental and social justice, inclusion, and equity for all by 1. effectively building capacity for populations most affected by inequities; 2. dismantling systems, policies and practices that perpetuate structural racism and inequality in our community; and 3. producing measurable outcomes to make Abington a more just and equitable place to live, work, build, study, pray, play, or visit so that all people have a genuine opportunity to achieve their full potential in a healthy environment;
- Abington Township calls on the State of Pennsylvania to set a goal to use 100% renewable energy for all purposes no later than 2050; to adopt codes and standards to increase the efficiency of buildings and appliances; and to increase the Alternative Energy Portfolio Standards to levels that put our Commonwealth on track to meet 100% renewable energy goals and "net-zero" statewide emissions by 2050;

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that this resolution is effective immediately upon approval.

I HEREBY CERTIFY that this Resolution was adopted by Abington Township at its public meeting held on the 8th day of July, 2021.

ATTEST:

ABINGTON TOWNSHIP

Richard J. Manfredi
Township Manager & Secretary

John L. Spiegelman, President
Board of Commissioners